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## Newsletter - 1974-01-24

E. De la Garza

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FROM: Kika de la Garza

WASHINGTON, D C--The main focus of the news media covering the Nation's Capital was on other subjects during the first session of the 93rd Congress but the fact is that we were very busy on legislative matters.

During the recent interim between the first session and the second session, now under way, I gave some study to what Congress accomplished in 1973. We legislated, which is our job. We spent, if not quite all, by far a major part of our time in debating and passing or rejecting legislative measures.

Your Congressman voted for some of these measures, against others. South Texans may agree with some of them, may disagree with others. That is as it should be. If all of us agreed on everything, we would be a different kind of people and would have a different kind of government and a different kind of country. My point is that no objective person can label the 93rd Congress, on the basis of its first session, anything but a hardworking body of men and women.

\* \* \* \* \*

SCORE CARD--Here are some highlights of the 1973 legislative record.

Faced with the energy crisis, the Congress approved mandatory fuel allocation, the trans-Alaska pipeline, and energy conservation in federal buildings. A sweeping Energy Emergency Act (which contained some provisions I could not agree to) was left hanging and will no doubt receive renewed attention in the near future. I will continue to do everything I can to protect the legitimate interests of South Texas farmers and ranchers, oil and gas development, food processors and transporters, commercial fisherman, builders, and our important tourist industry,

In the field of health and safety, affecting the lives of all Americans, the Congress extended health programs, approved law enforcement assistance with planning grants made available to state and local governments, provided for the establishment of health maintenance organizations, and passed legislation enlarging the scope of services for the elderly and creating a number of new programs for the aged.

Flood-prone areas in South Texas and elsewhere will benefit from the flood disaster protection Congress wrote into law in 1973. Levels of coverage available through the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 were substantially increased. Congress approved additional rural development authorization levels.

The Economic Development Administration was extended for a year, giving an opportunity for Congress to examine it and make any needed changes. Social Security benefits were increased.

Legislation was enacted to improve health care for veterans, to increase burial allowances for veterans and to improve job opportunities for veterans.

This by no means exhausts the list of legislation enacted or set on the way to final enactment during the first session of the 93rd Congress. It is enough, I think, to show that your representatives were at work throughout the year.

\* \* \* \* \*

WHAT'S AHEAD?--More of the same, so far as work goes.

After the President's traditional State of the Union message, which he will deliver in person this year on 29 January, statements will follow closely on the budget, expected on 30 January, and the economic outlook, anticipated for 31 January. Then will come messages from the White House on health insurance, education, veterans, natural resources and environment, rural development, heroin trafficking and energy.

Congress already has moved on its own initiative in all these important areas and the groundwork has been laid for further legislative action. Additional response is expected to be prompt.

Legislation covering budget reform and executive impoundment of appropriated funds has been passed by the House and will be the subject of conference with the Senate. The House Ways and Means Committee has done preliminary work on tax reform legislation, with full committee consideration expected in February. The House Education and Labor Committee is nearing completion of its work on the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Legislation affecting the energy crisis no doubt will come up early and often. Reform of private pension systems is on the schedule.

All this and more insures we won't be idle in 1974.

\* \* \* \* \*

AS TIME GOES ON--That 1973 House of Representatives calendar in the hands of many South Texans isn't out of date. If you have one, please tear off the sheet for December 1973. You will find January 1974 right under it. The calendar was issued for the two years of the 93rd Congress.

Also, I have some copies of a 1974 calendar published by the United States Capitol Historical Society. It contains beautiful illustrations of some of the great scenes of the Nation's Capital and is a work of art in the true sense of the term. I'll be happy to send one to any resident of the 15th Congressional District as long as my supply lasts.

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VISITORS FROM HOME--Visiting the office from home this week were: Mr Allen B Clark from Dallas formerly of Mission; Mr and Mrs Eugene Goodwin of Mission; and Mr Ernesto Contreras Jr of Brownsville.

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